MAGDALEN
COLLEGE SCHOOL

FOUNDED IN 1480
BY WILLIAM OF WAYNFLETE

Brief for the appointment of

Director of Development



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The School

Magdalen College School (MCS) is one of the country's leading independent day schools, located in the heart of Oxford, just beyond Magdalen Bridge. Founded in 1480 by William Waynflete, schoolmaster, Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor of England, the school has provided continuous education for over five centuries and remains closely connected to Magdalen College and to the city in which it sits.

"The Waynflete Office has been a vital part of the school during my tenure. I will be working closely with incoming Master, Alan Bird, to recruit our next Director of Development.

Thank you for your interest in this role; philanthropy and community engagement will continue to play a vital role to the future of Magdalen College School".



Background

Magdalen College School was founded in 1480 in order to prepare its pupils for the university life, and to educate its choristers. This proud heritage endures, and we are now one of the UK's topflight schools. We educate boys from age 7 to 18, with girls admitted into the Sixth Form, and are in the process of becoming fully coeducational. MCS currently educates around 950 pupils across its Junior School, Senior School and Sixth Form.

MCS is grounded in intellectual rigour and curiosity, combined with a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities and leavened with a sense of fun. Examination outcomes at both GCSE and A level are outstanding, and our pupils progress to highly selective universities in the UK and overseas, with a notable proportion securing places at Oxford, Cambridge, Ivy League universities and other leading global institutions.

Academic expectations are high, but achievement is rooted in depth of understanding rather than simply exam preparation. Public examination outcomes are consistently outstanding and reflect this approach. In the most recent published results (2026), 97% of A Level grades were awarded at A*-B, with 83% at A*-A and 46% at A*. The most common grade awarded to MCS pupils was A*, and 70% of the cohort attained 3 A*s or more.

Beyond the classroom, MCS places significant emphasis on music, sport, drama as part of a full co-curricular life.



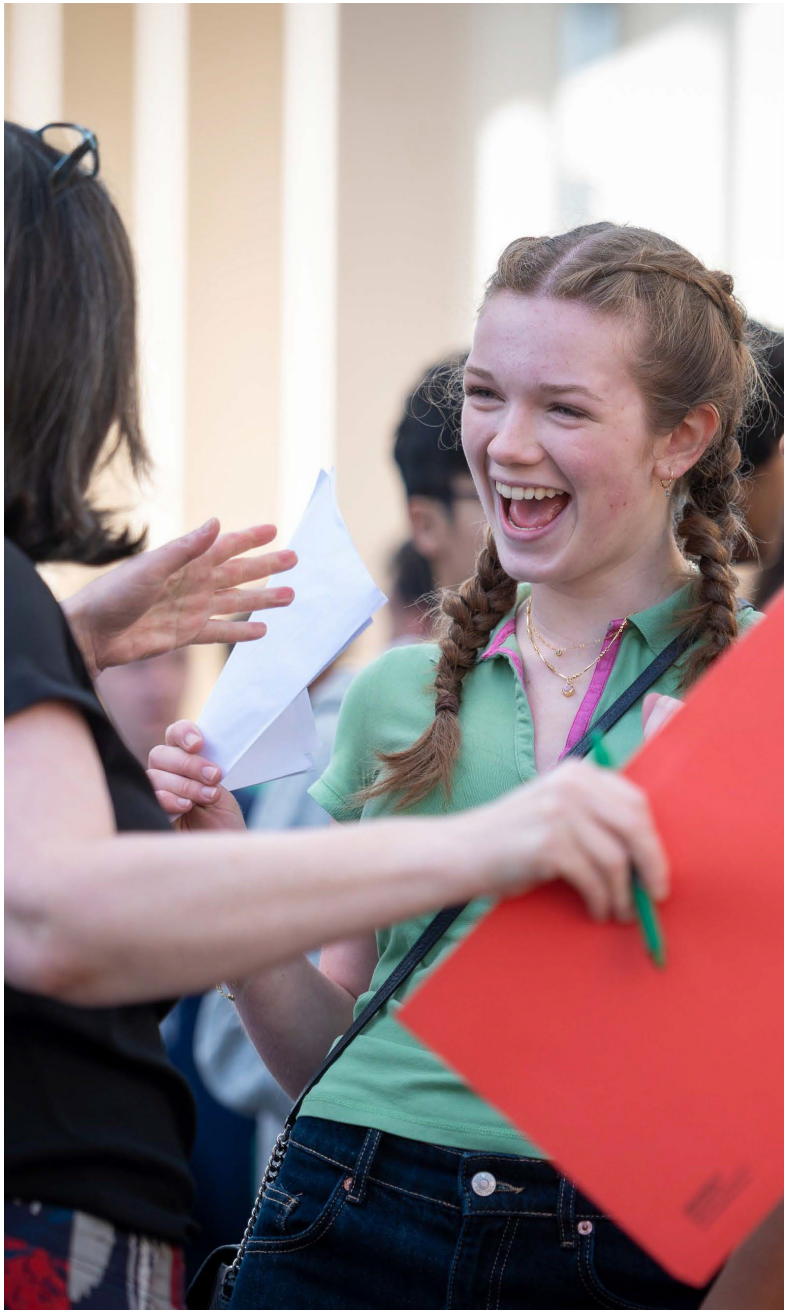


Philanthropy

MCS is looking for a gifted Director of the Waynflete Office to work alongside the Master in securing the next iteration of the School's development ambitions. During the past decade, the school has raised substantial funds for the Richard Record Sixth Form Centre and for bursaries, alongside a range of school projects that benefit pupils and the wider community.

The school's enduring strategic priority is to achieve an endowment of £15 million by 2030 –the school's 550th anniversary– in order to secure bursary provision in perpetuity. The endowment now stands at £12 million, thanks to the commitment of the school, and the generosity of Old Waynfletes, parents and friends.

This support has been transformational for MCS. The proportion of bursaries supported by donors in 2018 was 20%; now it is over 50%; all Sixth formers on a bursary are funded through donations.
MCS has planning permission for a new Science, Library and Partnerships Building. Again, philanthropy will be important in securing the excellence of these school facilities and the school's wider role in Oxford through lab-based science teaching for local primary schools.



Aims and Ethos

Shaped by its Collegiate foundation and its place within the city of Oxford, MCS seeks to inspire in all its pupils a desire to learn, flourish and serve.

The school's aims are:

- To facilitate a full and rich intellectual and moral education in a liberal community, fostering a joy in learning which enables each pupil to develop an independent and searching mind.
- To nurture confidence and a willingness to embrace a challenge, developing each individual's participation in and enjoyment of a broad range of pursuits, both within and beyond the classroom.
- To provide a safe, friendly and supportive environment in which individuality is valued through mutual support, respect and toleration.
- To equip pupils to make a positive and lasting contribution to their communities, both now and in the future.

Wider School Life

Co-curricular activities play a central role in life at MCS. Provision across sport, music drama and philanthropy is both broad and deeply embedded, complemented by a wide range of clubs and societies that reflect pupils' varied interests.

Music is a particular strength, rooted in the school's choral tradition and sustained by a large and active musical community. There are around 40 ensembles, with pupils performing regularly both in school and at venues across Oxford.

Drama is similarly prominent, with approximately 10-14 productions each year spanning classical and contemporary work, musicals and studio productions.

Sport is hugely popular, with a strong emphasis on both participation and performance. The vast majority of pupils represent the school in competitive fixtures during their time at MCS, and recent years have seen national success in sports including hockey, sailing and tennis, alongside.

The School's pupil-led charity committee is a dynamic element of School life, and pupils participate in the School's successful Giving Days.

Pastoral

Pastoral care at MCS places great value on the individual and is widely regarded as a key strength of the school. Every pupil is known well, with tutors playing a central role in day-to-day pastoral and academic oversight, working closely with Heads of Year and Heads of Section to ensure continuity and support at each stage.

Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, are characterised by warmth, mutual respect and trust. The school places strong emphasis on well-being and kindness and personal responsibility, fostering an environment in which pupils feel supported, confident and able to flourish both academically and personally.

Co-education

In February 2026, MCS announced its move towards full co-education, offering places to high-achieving boys and girls as the school prepares to celebrate its 550th anniversary.

This decision is a natural next step, building on more than fifteen successful years of co-education in the Sixth Form, and will strengthen the school's long- standing commitment to breadth, inclusion and individual flourishing.

The transition to full co-education will be gradual, with girls joining in Years 3 and 4 in 2027, and Year 7 in 2030, with all year groups co-educational across the school from September 2034.

This comes at an exciting time for MCS, with planning permission in place for a new Science, Library and Partnerships Building, and the first target of its bursary endowment fund in reach. Framed not as a departure from tradition but as a natural evolution, the move to full co-education combines continuity of all that makes the school distinctive with a forward-looking confidence about MCS's role in contemporary education.

Partnerships

Partnership and community engagement are long-standing and integral features of life at MCS. For over five centuries, the school has understood itself as being deeply rooted in its local environment, with a clear commitment to collaboration, service and shared benefit. Today, this ethos is expressed through sustained partnerships with local schools, charities and community organisations across Oxford and the surrounding area.

Educational partnerships sit at the heart of this work. MCS works closely with local primary and secondary schools to deliver subject based enrichment, academic extension and guidance on future study, from early years through to university preparation. Flagship initiatives such as The Bridge provide long-term academic enrichment for high-achieving pupils from Oxford primary schools, while a wide programme of workshops, events and shared teaching supports aspiration, confidence and access.

International

In recent years the MCS family of schools has been growing, with new partnerships forged with organisations which share the school's ethos and values.

Key partnerships include a collaboration with the Sunway Education Group, supporting the development of high quality teaching and learning in an international setting in Kuala Lumpur; engagement with the Canadian International Education Organisation (CIEO) to establish Magdalen College School International Bangkok, due to open in 2028; and a long-standing partnership with Mustardseed Junior School in Uganda, reflecting MCS's commitment to education as a driver of access, social mobility and community development.



The Waynflete Office

The Office has two overarching goals:

- To achieve sufficient philanthropic income to enable the School to advance its strategic priorities, particularly in relation to the endowment and capital funding for the ambitions for 2030.
- To deliver an engagement programme, focussed on Old Waynfletes but also involving parents, which will help to enhance the school experience for all current pupils and grow affinity between Old Waynfletes, past and current parents, and the School.

The Office runs a successful major gifts programme, a growing regular and mid-level community of donors, and this year celebrated the tenth anniversary of its Legacy Society. The school's wider community of alumni and former and current parents' numbers around 11,000.

MCS has run four Giving Days and undertakes telethons in alternate years. Sixteen in-person events took place in Oxford, London and New York last year, in addition to webinars and reunion visits, with over 1,200 attendees. The five-year rolling average of donation income is £1.4 million. Last year over 750 donors contributed 3,500 individual gifts.

Fundraising and Philanthropy

The Director of the Waynflete Office will:

- Lead all fundraising activity across the School. Build and manage relationships with major donors and prospective supporters. Manage the programme of fundraising that enables donors to participate at all levels.
- Develop compelling communications to explain the significance of transformation projects, particularly to raise funds for bursaries, the endowment and strategic projects, including the new science facilities.
- Decide on the pattern of activity in support of the major gift, mid-level giving and legacy programmes, while also shaping the wider campaigns, including Giving Days, postal appeals and telethons.

Alumni and Community Engagement

- Strengthen relationships with Old Waynfletes and the wider MCS community.
- Increase participation and engagement amongst Old Waynfletes and parents by creating communications, events and volunteer programmes.
- Promote lifelong engagement with the School.
- Responsible for the production and distribution decisions for the alumni magazine, the Bridge, which goes to 6,000 OWs, and the Donor Report, which goes to all parents and OWs, along with a range of brochures for fundraising and the archive collections.



External Engagement

- Act as a compelling ambassador for MCS, representing the School externally with donors, foundations, community partners and professional networks.
- Support the Master and Governors in cultivating key stakeholder relationships.
- Enhance the School's reputation locally, nationally and internationally.

Organisational Leadership

- Lead and develop the Waynflete Office, including line management of three staff in the wider team of five.
- Line management of the school Archivist ensuring the Archives policies are appropriate, and the Archive contributes to engagement with the school.
- Ensure effective stewardship of donors and ensure all donations are correctly recorded. Work with the Director of Finance to ensure donations processes pass the annual audit and that donations are disbursed appropriately.
- Work with the Director of Finance to ensure the impact of donations in financial terms are correctly reported.
- Work with the Bursar and staff to ensure named bursaries are allocated appropriately, and opportunities are aligned with the admissions timetable.
- Manage the budgets for the Waynflete Office and the Archive.
- Ensure regulatory compliance with the Fundraising Regulator and funding organisations such as CAF, BSUF, TGE, and SPF. Have a current understanding of best practice in fundraising.

Remuneration

- This is an all-year-round full-time contract.
- This role offers an attractive and competitive salary range commensurate on skills and experience.



The Person

The next Director of Development should be an exceptional, highly-motivated individual who is able to offer the following experience, skills, knowledge and personal attributes.



Experience

- A successful track record in fundraising, advancement, alumni relations or senior stakeholder engagement.
- Experience of developing and delivering strategic objectives.
- Experience of leading and developing teams
- Evidence of building productive relationships with influential individuals and organisations.

Skills and Knowledge

- Demonstrable success in securing major philanthropic gifts and developing long-term donor relationships
- Experience of planning and delivering major fundraising campaigns, capital appeals or transformational fundraising initiative
- Knowledge of fundraising across major donors, trusts and foundations, regular giving and legacy programmes.
- Experience of using CRM systems and fundraising data to support prospect management, reporting and donor stewardship.
- Strong understanding of GDPR, ethical fundraising principles and relevant fundraising regulation.
- Experience of managing budgets, financial forecasting and fundraising performance reporting.



Leadership Style and Personal Attributes

- A highly credible and relationship-focused leader.
- Intellectually curious and strategically minded.
- Resilient, adaptable and able to operate effectively in a complex stakeholder environment.

Life in Oxford

Located at Magdalen Bridge, with views toward both the city centre and East Oxford, MCS is close to a wealth of cultural, entertainment, and educational venues.

The City

As one of the world's most prestigious university cities, Oxford has a rich history dating back over a thousand years. Established in the early medieval period, the city grew around its strategic location on the River Thames, which facilitated trade and transportation. By the 12th century, it became an educational hub with the founding of the University of Oxford, the oldest university in the English-speaking world.

With its blend of ancient and modern, there is an abundance of activities to enjoy. Whether visiting one of the many historic buildings, colleges, or museums, dining in a restaurant, attending a theatre, music or opera performance, or enjoying the wide range of talks and public events which take place in the city and university, Oxford offers a diverse range of experiences which cater for all interests.

The University

MCS shares many links with the University. Staff enjoy free entry to the Oxford Botanic Garden and Harcourt Arboretum, they can attend choral evensong, sung by our choristers in Magdalen College Chapel, and use the University sports facilities on Iffley Road.

During the university's full term, Oxford hosts numerous talks, performances, exhibitions, fixtures, events, and celebrations throughout the academic year.

The Arts

Oxford is celebrated not only for its academic heritage but also for its cultural life. The Ashmolean Museum, the oldest public museum in the UK, showcases art and archaeology from around the world. The city's theatres, offer a range of performances, while the annual Oxford Literary Festival attracts renowned authors and literary enthusiasts alike.



How to Apply

Candidates wanting to apply to this vacancy should complete and submit the online application form no later than Midday on Monday 14th December 2026.

Documentation

Candidates should submit their application form via the website. Click here
The complete application should be submitted no later than Monday 14th December 2026, at midday; early applications are highly encouraged.

References

References may be taken up in advance. If you do not wish for your references to be called for at this stage, please make that clear on the reference section of the application form.

Interviews

We anticipate holding first round interviews during w/c 11th January and second round interviews date to be confirmed. We will be in contact with shortlisted candidates through the recruitment system.

Please be aware that all shortlisted candidates will be requested to complete a 'Self-Disclosure' form before attending their interview.

We reserve the right to interview and appoint before the above dates.

Equal Opportunities

Magdalen College School recognises and is committed to ensuring applicants and employees from all sections of the community are treated equally regardless of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marital and civil partnership status, or pregnancy and maternity. We welcome applications form all sections of the community.

Safeguarding Policy

Magdalen College School is committed to the safeguarding of pupils, and any offer of employment will be subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure, the receipt of satisfactory references, the school's pre-employment medical questionnaire, plus sight of relevant ID documentation and degree certificate(s). The enhanced DBS check is due to this role being exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.



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